

New Program Groups Align Strategy with Base-level Ops

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In September 2009, Civil Engineering approved an updated Governance Structure that established an inclusive and transparent decision-making culture with new Program Groups to manage initiatives across nine core activities: Asset Optimization, Housing, Energy, Environmental, Operations, Planning, Built Infrastructure, Resources, and Expeditionary and Emergency Services.

"Program groups will serve as workhorses to identify the best practices and innovations that will make our day-to-day work activities better," explained Maj Gen Timothy Byers, The Civil Engineer.

As the "building blocks" of Civil Engineering, Program Groups are the first level of tactical oversight for executing initiatives across the community, driving coordination and partnership in base-level improvements.

The concept of Program Groups is not new to Civil Engineering. Civil Engineers have long leveraged their combined expertise to provide insight to leadership on matters such as strategy, IT management, and resource allocation. Program Groups align Civil Engineering's strategic vision with base-level operations, and were formed to manage the continuous improvement of policy, process, IT, performance measurement, Playbook processes, and communication, as well as the impacts of these efforts on Civil Engineering.

"Every one of us has a job to do on a day-to-day basis, and that has not changed as a result of this new Governance Structure," Maj Gen Byers said. "What has changed, however, is that there is now a mechanism in place to ensure what you do is helping Civil Engineering meet its mission more directly, and that your leadership has the visibility and insight to give you the tools you need to achieve success. More importantly, a good idea at one base can be shared and benefits reaped at all our installations."

This new Governance Structure will involve a broad range of experts from across Civil Engineering through the development of targeted "Panels." A primary role of Program Groups is to commission Panels that will examine day-to-day activities to identify and adopt best practices; define IT requirements; and recommend policy revisions. Installation-level personnel will make up the majority of Panel members and will provide expertise to develop and carry out these specific initiatives.

In essence, the new CE Governance structure formalizes the process by which civil engineers collect information and coordinate efforts, reducing possible redundancies and ensuring efforts are in line with Civil Engineering's overall strategic direction. The Governance Structure makes Civil Engineering's leadership more capable of properly organizing, training, and equipping civil engineers for the challenges ahead. Moving forward, the new governance process will help avoid duplicative initiatives and reporting while improving overall transparency of decision making. Civil engineers engaged in governance will have visibility on work occurring across the community, and will have the opportunity to actively contribute to transformation projects, business process reengineering, and other continuous process improvement initiatives.

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Mr. Jerry Vesey, 37 CES, observes the settings on a non-surge check valve, part of a system that delivers fuel to aircraft flying to and from the Kelly Field Annex. (photo by Ms. Robbin Cresswell)